

Amendment and Response
Serial No. 09/920,439

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0005] with the following amended paragraph:

B [0005] In one aspect, the invention relates to a sole for an article of footwear. The sole includes a sole layer and a mesh layer at least partially embedded in the sole layer. The mesh layer can have a contoured surface including a knit structure formed from one or more threads. The one or more threads can include spun fibers. The threads can be constructed from one or more metals, polyesters, polyamides, aramids, and combinations of these materials. The mesh layer can extend beyond a bottom ground engaging surface of the sole layer or can be substantially ~~coterminous~~ coterminous with the bottom surface of the sole layer. The sole layer can include one or more profile grooves defined by the bottom surface of the sole layer. The sole layer can include a damping material including ethylene vinyl acetate, polyurethane, rubber, and combinations of these materials.

Please replace paragraph [0007] with the following amended paragraph:

B 2 [0007] In various embodiments, the mesh layer can extend beyond a bottom ground engaging surface of the sole layer or can be substantially ~~coterminous~~ coterminous with the bottom surface of the sole layer. The sole layer can include one or more profile grooves defined by the bottom surface of the sole layer. The sole layer can include a damping material including ethylene vinyl acetate, polyurethane, rubber, and combinations of these materials.

Please replace paragraph [0008] with the following amended paragraph:

B 3 [0008] In yet another aspect, the invention relates to a method for manufacturing a sole for an article of footwear. The method includes the steps of providing a mold, inserting a mesh into the mold, and forming a sole layer in the mold, the sole layer having the mesh layer at least partially embedded in the sole layer. The method can include the step of mounting the mesh to an inner surface of the mold. The mold can have an inner surface structure complementary to that of the mesh. Alternatively or additionally, the inner surface structure can form one or more profile grooves in the bottom surface of the sole layer formed therein. The sole layer can be formed so that the mesh extends beyond a bottom surface of the sole layer or is substantially ~~coterminous~~

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coterminous with the bottom surface of the sole layer. The sole layer can be formed by injection molding, compression molding, or other suitable method.

Please replace paragraph [0009] with the following amended paragraph:

B4
[0009] In still yet another aspect, the invention relates to a method for manufacturing an article of footwear. The method includes the steps of providing a mold, inserting a mesh into the mold, and forming a sole layer in the mold, the sole layer having the mesh layer at least partially embedded in the sole layer. The method also includes attaching an upper to the sole layer. The method can include the step of applying the mesh to an inner surface of the mold. The mold can have an inner surface structure complementary to that of the mesh. Alternatively or additionally, the inner surface structure can form one or more profile grooves in the bottom surface of the sole layer formed therein. The sole layer can be formed so that the mesh extends beyond a bottom surface of the sole layer or is substantially ~~coterminous~~ coterminous with the bottom surface of the sole layer. The sole layer can be formed by injection molding, compression molding, or other suitable method.

Please replace paragraph [0018] with the following amended paragraph:

B5
[0018] One or more profile or flex grooves 150 can be included in the sole layer 140 to further improve traction and impart flexibility to the sole 120. The sole layer 140 also can include profile ridges or other known protruding features to improve traction. Traction also can be improved by combining a mesh 130 that is substantially ~~coterminous~~ coterminous with the sole layer 140, as described above in connection with FIGS. 1A-1C, with a mesh that extends beyond the bottom ground engaging surface 142 of the sole layer 140, as described below in connection with FIGS. 2A-2B.

Please replace paragraph [0021] with the following amended paragraph:

B6
[0021] The mesh 230 can cover all or portions of the bottom surface 242, front surface 244 or side surface of the sole 220 and be combined with a mesh that is ~~coterminous~~ coterminous with the bottom surface 242 of the sole layer 240. The sole 220 can optionally contain either no profile elements or a variety of profile elements that can be raised or grooved. The soles of the

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present invention can also include an additional sole layer, and the mesh can be embedded in this additional layer instead of the cushioning sole layer.

Please replace paragraph [0027] with the following amended paragraph:

b7
[0027] FIGS 4A-4B depict another embodiment of an article of footwear or shoe 401 in accordance with the present invention. The shoe 401 generally includes an upper 410 attached to a sole 420 that includes a mesh 430 embedded in a sole layer 440. The mesh 430 extends along and is substantially ~~eeterninus~~ coterminous with a bottom surface 442 of the sole layer 440. Also shown are profile grooves 450 defined by the bottom surface 442 of the sole layer 440. The mesh 430 is woven from spun threads 435.

Please replace paragraph [0029] with the following amended paragraph:

b8
[0029] FIG. 5 depicts yet another embodiment of an article of footwear or shoe 501. The shoe 501 generally includes an upper 510 attached to a sole 520 that includes a mesh 530 embedded in a sole layer 540. The mesh 530 extends along and is substantially ~~eeterninus~~ coterminous with a bottom surface 542 of the sole layer 540. Also shown are profile grooves 550 defined by the bottom surface 542 of the sole layer 540. The mesh 530 is woven from spun threads 135, as described with respect to FIGS. 1A-1C. Shoe 501 avoids the use of a conventional, heavy outsole, without sacrificing good damping, abrasion resistance, and traction properties.

Please replace paragraph [0032] with the following amended paragraph:

b9
[0032] Another aspect of the present invention concerns methods of manufacturing a sole for an article of footwear. The method includes the steps of providing a mold, inserting a mesh into the mold, and forming a sole layer in the mold, the sole layer having a mesh layer at least partially embedded in the sole layer. The mold can be any type of mold, including a compression mold or an injection mold, as described below in FIG. 7 and FIG. 8. The sole, including the mesh and the sole layer, can be constructed from any of the materials and have any of the configurations described above. The mesh can be substantially ~~eeterninus~~ coterminous and/or project from the bottom surface of the sole layer, as described above.

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Please replace paragraph [0034] with the following amended paragraph:

B¹⁰
[0034] The mold also can have additional structural features on the inner surface 772 to form profile ridges and/or grooves as described above. When forming a sole with both ~~coterminus~~ coterminous mesh and mesh that extends beyond the sole layer, the mold 770 might have complementary structures in some portions of the inner surface and not in others.

Please replace paragraph [0038] with the following amended paragraph:

B¹¹
[0038] The mold 860 also can have structural features to form profile ridges and/or grooves as described above. When forming a sole with both ~~coterminus~~ coterminous mesh and mesh that extends beyond the sole layer, the mold 860 might have complementary structures in some portions of the inner surface and not in others.

Please replace paragraph [0039] with the following amended paragraph:

B¹²
[0039] The method also can include the step of coating the portions of the mesh that are to extend from the sole layer with a removable film or release agent, so that these portions are selectively prevented from being embedded in the sole layer during the embedding step. This obviates the need for complementary structural features and allows the injection mold to be used in forming a variety of soles with different mesh configurations that are partially embedded in the sole layer and/or substantially ~~coterminus~~ coterminous with the sole layer. The method also can include the step of coating portions of the mesh that are to be embedded in the sole layer with a bonding agent such as adhesive or crosslinker to improve bonding between the mesh and the sole layer. Use of a release agent would prevent bonding, as known by those skilled in the art.